

# Daily Planet

Customer and Employee Relations Directorate,  
Internal Relations and Communications Department

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**Gordon Cooper Jr.**  
1927-2004

## **'Mercury Seven' astronaut Gordon Cooper Jr. dies**

**G**ordon Cooper Jr., 77, one of the original "Mercury Seven" astronauts, died Monday at his home in Ventura, Calif. Cooper set a U.S. record for human space flight in 1963 -- piloting his Mercury capsule named "Faith 7" during a 22-orbit, 34-hour mission. He commanded the Gemini 5 mission in August 1965. Only three of the original seven astronauts now survive. "Cooper's efforts and those of his fellow Mercury astronauts ... serve as reminders of what drives us to explore," said NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe. "He truly portrayed the right stuff. My thoughts and prayers are with Gordon's family during this difficult time."

## **NASA officials analyzing RTF schedule due to hurricanes**

**A**fter four Hurricanes affected four NASA facilities in the Southeastern United States, Agency officials met Friday to discuss the Space Shuttle's return to flight. NASA officials had hoped to launch in March-April 2005, but that timetable is no longer achievable. "More than a year ago, we set out a specific plan for Return to Flight with specific milestones," said William Readdy, NASA associate administrator for Space Operations. "Right now, those milestones are pointing us toward a new launch window." The next available launch window opens May 14, 2005.

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